Sri:

Srimathaya Gopalaya Namaha. Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha.

21896

Srivilliputtur Sri Andal Temple

Guide and History

21775

— Publishers —

E. THENIAH, M. A., B. L., (1980)

EXECUTIVE OFFICER,

ARULMIGU NACHIAR THIRUKKOIL.

Srimatheyai Godhayai Namaha
Srimathe Ramanujaya Namaha

Publishers :

Guide and History of Sri Andal Temple

SRIVILLIPUTTUR.

Author :

Thiru G. KALYANAM, M. A., Dip. Economics.

The Second edition is published with more particulars which attracts every one to have a mind to study about the full history of this temple and the town and I will be extremely happy that this book will serve as a usful guide to those who desire to visit this sacred shrine and get the blessings of Goddess SRI ANDAL.

E. Theniah, M. A., B. L.,
Executive Officer I.
Arulmigu Nachiarkoil,
Srivilliputtur.

1980

(Fasli : 1389)

acharya.org

Sri Andal - Sri Rengamannar.

acharya.org

SRI ANDAL

acharya.org

I. INTRODUCTORY.

India is a land of Sages, Seers and Saints. It will not be too much to say that South India has contributed much to that holy band. The most important of them are the.....Alvars (Vaishnava Saints) and Nayanmars (Saiva Saints). The canonised Vaishnava saints are twelve in number and they propagated Vaishnavism in South India. The essential things to be learnt in Sri Vaishnavam, (traditionally so called) are five called the Arthapanchakam, These are parabrahmam, Atma Upaya, Virodhi and Palan. Of these God stands first. The Vaishnava concept of God consists of five graded stages called the para, the Vyutha, the Vibhava, the Antaryami and the Archa. The para stage is in the Parama Padha where God with His three consorts Sridevi. Bhudevi and Neeladevi is surrounded by perfect souls called the Nityas and Muktas. Here there is no scope for God's Kripa or Grace at all as there is no impurity, imperfection or fault anywhere. The next stage called the VYUHA is where God desends a step and comes to the Milky Ocean and issues orders to Brahma and other top level functionaries. The next lower stage is the VIBHAVA where God comes on special occasions to the earth to protect innocence and punish wickedness. In this stage we have the Ten Avatharas, (incarnations). The principle of incarnation is set foth in Bhagavad-Gita where Sri Krishna says "where virtue subsides and vice prevails I come down to the World". In the next stage of Antaryami God is immanent in every soul as the soul inside the soul. The last but most important stage

acharya.org

is the Archa where God in the form of idols gives Darshan to devotees as objective reality in temples and other places of worship. Vaishnava scholars attach the greatest importance to this stage. They bring it out in a nice illustration. These five stages are respectively compared to water found in the stratosphere, milky ocean, foods in rivers, sub-soil water and water stored in reservoirs. It is the last that is always readily available to quench the thirst of a person. Thus God has full utility value only in Archavathars. God is the soul behind everything within the soul category (Chetana Prapancha) and the world category (Achetana Prapancha) as inseparable Viseshanas and Advaita with these is called Visishtadvaita. The means to attain salvation is various but Vaishnavaa emphasise (Prapathi, or) soul's absolute self surrender to God. The obstacles to salvation are overcome with the help of God's Grace. The stage called salvation is life in the Paramapadha with a body of effulgent light and service or Kainkarya as its perpetual function. Kainkarya or service is the most essential thing even in worldly life. Dhaya or kindness to souls is the most distinguishing characteristic of Vaishnavas. This in short is the essence of Vaishnavism. Of the twelve Alvars who spread this Vaishnava cult among the masses, two namely Periyalvar and Andal hail from Srivilliputtut. We shall try to know something about this holy place in this small book.

acharya.org

2. LOCATION

Srivilliputtur lies among picturesque surroundings The western ghats with ever green forests runs to its west and there are also mountains to the north and south-west. There is a spacious grove called 'Shenbaga Tope' adjoining the town which is a good place for picnic. Srivilliputtur is a Municipal town and the head quarters of the taluk of the same name in Ramanathapuram District, of Tamil Nadu. It is a railway station in the Virudhunagar-Tenkasi chord line of the Southern Railway. The town is situated within a mile from the railway station and the temple lies in the midst of the town at about one and a half miles from the station. Carts are available at the railway station. The population of the town is about 55,000. The town is electrified and has protected water-supply. Buses ply from Madurai, Rajapalayam, Sivakasi and Tenkasi. There are civil criminal Courts and taluk office. There are four High Schools, two for boys and two for girls. There is also a Training School for women. There is a good library called the 'Pennington library'-containing valuable books. Saint Guru Gnanasambandar, the founder of Dharmapuram Adheenam in Mayuram Taluk of Thanjavur District was born at this place.

There is a Municipal Travellers, bungalow near Tirumukkulam tank, a P. W. D. Dak bungalow in Sivakasi road and a Municipal chatram in Sakkarai kulam Street.

Pappu Chetti Chatram and Sowrashtra chatram are in the South Car Street, a Ramanujakutam in

acharya.org

West Car Street and Narayana Guruviah Chetty chatram in the Sannidhi street, Rooms for rent are also available in the Municipal Bus stand and in Dhanalakshmi Lodge in Kanthadai Street very near the temple. There is a Tirumalai Nayak's building in south Car street where taluk office and District Munisif's Court are housed. It is said Tirumalai Nayak used to Come and stay here.

acharya.org

3. DESCRIPTION OF TEMPLE

There are two temples side by side and in between the two there is a garden where Andal appeared as Ayonija. Two ground plans, one showing the temple of Andal and the other that of Vadabhadrasayee and the garden, are attached. Both temples face east.

Andal temple lies just a little south west of the other temple. It is said that this was the original place of residence of Periyalvar locally known as Nachiar Thirumaaligai. Just in front of this temple, in the Sannadhi street there is what is called the Singammal Kuradu, a four-pillared mantapa. Passing this we enter the Muthudai pandal mantapa. In the south lie some shops and in the north there are the Vanamamalai Mutt and Desigar's and Manavalamamunigal's sannidhis. Then we proceed to the spacious Niraithaltha Pandal mantapa where Andal's Thirukalyanam takes place in the month of Panguni. In the south eastern corner of this mantapa there is the ticket-counter and in the north lies the Devasthanam Office. We then proceed in to the temple proper by the towergate. In the middle of the passage there is the flag-staff and on the rows of pillars on either side there are beautiful sculptures. We shall have a descriptive account of these sculptures in a later chapter. We now go round the outer prakara In the eastern outer prakara there is the Gajalakshmi sannidhi and the temple kitchen.

The northern prakara consists of clothes room and the vehicles (Vahna) room. In the south-western

acharya.org

corner lies Sri Rama's Sannidhi and in the north western corner there is Sri Sundararajan's Sannidhi. In the southern outer prakara there are the store room, thaila room, Sorgavasal, extra kitchen, Theertham Ekadesi mantapa and Yagasala. In the north-east lies the Kottaram. By another gate we enter the inner prakara. To the left we see facing north the Lakshminarayanan's Sannidhi, with Renganathar koradu nearly. This is said to have been worshipped by saint periyalvar i. e. his Anmarthamurthi To the right in a lower level there is Vishvaksena or Senaimudaliar's sannidhi. In the walls of the inner prakara there are beautiful paintings of the 108 Divyadesas or shrines sung by the Alvars in the Divyaprabanda. The exquisite workmanship of the painting of Andal, Sri Rengamannar and Garuda in the middle portion of the western wall is a feast to the eyes. Thiruppavai songs are depicted by sudhai work alround the bottom portion of the vimanam. From the inner prakara we go to Main mantapa known as Madhavi pandhal by steps in the southern side. Then we enter the Mahamandapa. There is in the middle, the gold plated Sukravara kuradu, in the side pillars of which there are the statues of Tirumalai Nayak and his consort. Here every Friday Andal and Sri Rangamannar are having their swinging. Just to its north there is Tirumanchana-kuradu where idols have their ablution To the east of this Kuradu (Platform) there is the Mirror-well from the water of which Andal used to see her reflection and enjoy her beauty to see whether she was fit to become the spouse of the Lord. The water of the well is crystalclear and never becomes dry and

acharya.org

there are also no water species like fish or frog. Adjoining this well there is the treasure-room containing valuable jewels. In the Ardhamantapa there are the festival deities (Utsava murthis) of Andal, Sri Ranga-mannar and Garuda on the gold plated sthapana Gopala Mancha. A legend goes to say that Urchavar Andal came out of Garbagraha to receive the saint Ramanuja at Ardhamandapam. From there on, the urchava deity continues to be in Ardhamandapam. Just behind is the Garbagraha (Sanctum-Sanctorum). In it we see in bewitching charm the same three Murthis in Archa form (Idols) Unlike other temples, a special treatment is given to Garudalvar by being seated equally with Andal and Rangamannar. After worship at this place one has to go to the other temple.

The other temple lies just to the north-east and is called the temple of Periya Perumal or Vadabadrasayee or Vadapadrasayanar. There are three entrances. The main entrance in the east is addorned with a tall gopuram. There are also entrances in the south and west. Devotees coming from Andal temple generally go by the southern entrance.

Before getting into the temple by this gate we see the **Tirupoora Nandavanam** where periyalvar took Andal as founding. In the garden there, is a deity of Andal in the Tirupoora Mandapam **Vadapadrasayee Temple** where Andal is taken in procession on every Tirupooram. We then proceed to temple of Periya-perumal. Just inside the imposing tower-gate, we see to our left Kurthalvar Sannidhi. Further inside there are in the south the Sannidhis of udaiyavar and

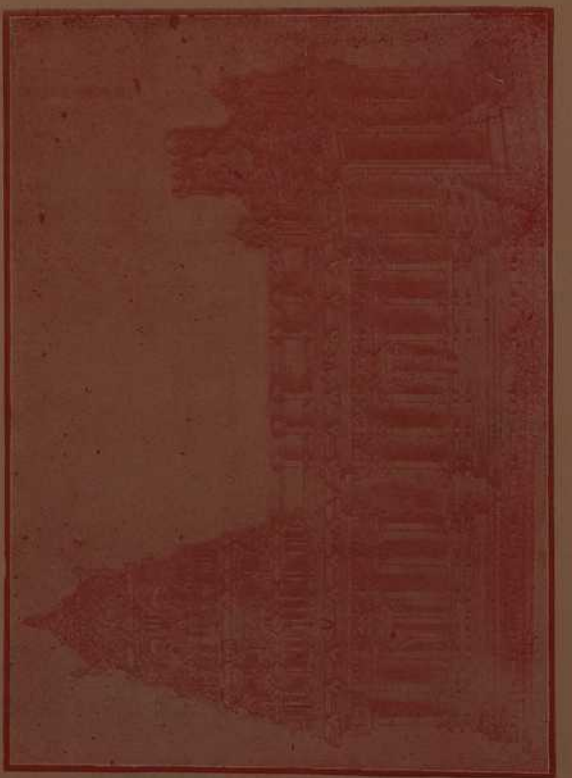
acharya.org

Nammalvar and the kitchen (Madappalli). on the northern side there is periyalvar's Sannidhi. The adjoining Mantapa is called Tiruvonam Mandapam with flag staff therein. In the groundfloor of this temple there are two prakaras. In the outer prakara there is Sakkarthalvar Sannidhi in the south-west corner, the Iraputhu Mantapa in the north and Vishnu Theertham (Well) in the north-east. To go to the inner praka we pass through another small tower-gate. To our right are the idols of Dasavatharams and the twelve Alvars. Facing east is Lakshimi Narasimhar's Sannidhi. To go to Vadabhadrasayee's sannidhi, we ascend the steps in the south prakara and worship Vishwaksenar and Kshethra Balahar at the upstairs. Eastern portion of the first floor is occupied by a mantapa called Gopalavilasam, otherwise called pahal patthu Mandapam In the western portion lies the Vadabhadrasayee's Sannidhi under the Vimalakrithi Vimana. He is in a lying posture on the serpent with both Sridevi and Bhudevi sitting at His feet On the three side walls inside the sanctum-sanctorum there are Garuda, Surya, Vishvaksena. Narada, Brahma, Gandarvas, Chandra, Madhu-Kaitaba, Brigu, Markandeya, Janatkumara all made of stucco and painted with colours. The figures of Madhu-Kaitaba are otherwise stated to be villi and Kantan, two hunters who founded Srivilliputtur. There is also a small prakara to go round the Vimana i. e., the Vimana pradakshina. We have so for seen about the formation of the two temples and the subshrines in them. We shall now proceed to know something about the greatness of the shrine.

acharya.org

SRI ANDAL TEMPLE-FRONT VIEW

acharya.org



Moolasthanam of his Andal Sannathi

acharya.org

4 GREATNESS OF THE SHRINE

South India can legitimately be proud of having more secred shrines than any other part of the land. Even among them people attach more importance and devotion to those shrines sanctified by the hymns of the Alvars and Nayanmars. There are 108 Divyadesams having the Mangalasasanam (Sanctification) by the Alvars. One such holy place dedicated to Lord Vishnu is Srivilliputtur It is also called Varahakshetra, Puthur or Puduvai, putrur or Vanmikapuram, Vadesvarapuram etc. After killing the Demon-king Hiranyaksha taking the form of Varaha, Lord Vishnu was pleased to take His abode here. Hence it is called Varahakshetra. He is called Vadebhadrasayanar Vadabhadrasayee, Vadamahadhama as lying under the great banyan tree. As the place was fist founded by a hunter-chief called Villi of Malli, it is named Srivilliputtur Putthur and Puduvai mean a newly established town. Putrur or Vanmikapuram mean the place of the ant-hil. The hunter chief is said to have found out Vadabhadrasayee hidden under an ant-hi'll. So it came to be called as such. There are three requisites for holding a holy place in high esteem Those are Murthi, Sthala and Theertham. We find all these three at Srivilliputtur. As we have already seen it is connected with one of the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. After destroying Hiranyaksha, He chose Srivilliputtur as His abode on the request of Bhudevi. That is how the Vadabhadrasayanar temple came to exist. The one unique thing in the other temple of Andal is that Andal, Rangamannar and Garuda stand

acharya.org

abreast in Ekasana. It is called Pranavakara-Dharsana. Rangarajan representing Akaram (அகரம்) Andal representing Ukaram (உகரம்) and Garuda representing Makaram (மகரம்) The philosophy behind it is that Rangamannar, Andal and Garuda denote Eswara, Prakriti and chetana which are called Tatvatraya in Vaishnava Siddhants God Rajagopalan taking Andal, a human being as His **Esternal Bride** on His right and Garuda, His Vehicle on his left is an unusal feature in this temple Here Rangamannar is not having his usual Sankha (Conch) and chakra (Disc) in His hands dut holds a seeptre, the like of which is not found in any other vishnu temple. Srivilliputtur is famous as being the birth place of two of the twelve Alvars, one being the only woman saint. They have also sung songs eulogising Lord Vishnu of this place Not only it is great in the matter of Murthi and Sthala but it has to its credit many Theerthams (Holy-waters). The Kannadi Theertham (Well) in Vadabhadrasayanar temple the chakra Theertham (tank) in the East sannidhi, the Tiruparkadal tank in the Railway feeder road, the Tirumukkulam tank or Triveni (having the conjunction of Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi) near the Municipal traveller's bungallow, the Manduganadhi (noopuraganga) falls near kattalagar temple, the Koneri tank at the foot of Tiruvannamalai and Kannuva Theertham or Rengu Theertham (a small water falls) five miles north of Srivilliputtur and the pancha Theerthams in Shenbaga tobe are a few among the other holy waters of this place. A bath in these theerthams will help tone to attain bliss. In the end we can say that for more reasons than one people call this sacred place as the Tirupathi of the South.

acharya.org

5 TRADITIONS AND LEGENDS

Tradition says that God Vishnu came down as Rangamannar, Bhudevi as Andal and Garuda as Periyalvar. There is a Sthala Purana is Sanskrit. This is said to have been narrated by Sutha Puranikar to the Sages of Naimisaranya as found in the Verahakshetra Mahathmyam in the Rahasya Kandam of the Varaha Purana. There are nine Adhyayas (Chapters) in it. A short summary of these chapters will not be out of place here.

I CHAPTER: **Greatness of Varahakshetra:**

Lord Vishnu took Veraha Avatara and killed Hiranyaksha, released Bhudevi, reinstated her and resorted to a sacred place to appear his anger and to take rest after His encounter with the demon-king. At the request of Bhudevi, he was pleased to take his abode permanently. Hence this holy spot came to be called as Varahakshetra.

II CHAPTER: **Sage Manuha's Redemption**

In the first part of this chapter mention is made of the location and extent of this Varahakshetra This is said to be to an extent of two yojanas (20 miles) abjoining the Dharmadri hill to the east of Podigai hills, the abode of Sage Agastya. One sage Sudhaba was doing penance on the banks of the Silambaru in Tirumalirunjolai. One day he was repeating Ahamarshana Mantra himself immersed under the river water. Sage Duruvasa came there. Sudhaba engaged in meditation under water could not receive him in time

acharya.org

Durvasa got angry and cursed him to become a frog (MANUHA). Sudhaba begged Durvasa for redemption. Durvasa told him that he should go to Dharmadri hill, bathe in the river there and perform penance along with the other sages and that he would then get back his original form He would also henceforth be called Manduka Rishi and the hill, Manduha Parvata. Sudhaba's request that he should also have the Dharsan of Sri Sundararajan of Tirumalirunjolai in Dharmadri hill was granted. Sudhaba went to Dharmadri hill and did penance and regained his original form from that of the frog. He was also graced with the Divya dharsan of Sri Sundararajan along with Sridevi and Bhudevi.

III CHAPTER: **Sage Manduha's Siddhi:**

God Sundararajan who appeared before Manduha told the latter that he would grant any boon he wanted. The sage prayed that he should have unflinchig devotion to God and that he should always remember His Lotus feet. His prayer was granted. From then onwards the Dharmadri hill came to be called as Manduha Parvate.

IV CHAPTER: **Killing of Kalanemi:**

At the foot of the Manduha hill there was a forest called Shenbagavanam. Sages were performing penance. There was one demonking called Kalanemi. He was giving trouble to Indra, Devas and the sages They went to Lord Narayana lying on the milky ocean and prayed to Him to relieve them of the unbearable suffering caused by Kalanemi. God told them that He

acharya.org

would help them. Fight arose between the Devas and Asuras under Kalanemi. God Vishnu appeared in time and sent His Chakra (DISC) Sudharsana as weapon and it killed the demon-king and returned. Rivers Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi appeared and jointly formed themselves into a tank where the disc Sudharsana had a wash of the blood-stains and returned to the Lord's hand. Thus came to exist the Tirukkulam or Tiruveni theertham. At a little distance from this sacred tank God took His abode under a great banyan tree The holy place therefore came to be called as Vadeswarapuram and the God as Vadamahadhaman.

V CHAPTER: **Greatness of Tiruveni:**

Some sages appeared before God Brahma in the Satyaloka and told him that they were coming from Jambudweepam after having their bath in the holy waters of the Godavari. River Goddesses Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswathi who were present there felt ashamed and requested Brahma to inform them why the sages took Godavari as a sacred river when older and holier rivers like themselves existed. Brahma explained that God Vishnu would specially grace His devotees and such were the sages who bathed in the river Godavari and that sage Goudhama and Sabari used to have their bath in the same river. The three river Goddesses prayed to Brahma that they should attain sacredness equal to that of Godavari. Brahma told them to go to Varahashetra and conjoin as a tank where Sudharsana Chakra would clean his blood-stains after killing kalanemi. They did so. The tank came to be called as Tirumukkulam or Triveni.

acharya.org

VI CHAPTER: **Story of Srivilliputtur:**

There lived in Malli two hunter-brothers called Villi and Kantan. One day they went out for hunting in the forests of Vadeswarapuram. Kantan followed a tiger and after going for some distance the tiger attacked him and killed him Villi roamed about the forest in search of his brother but could not find him. Tired as he was he fell asleep and in his dream Vadamahadhaman appeared and told him that his brother was killed by a tiger and that he (GOD) was lying hidden by shrubs, and that Villi should clear the forests and build a temple with the help of the pandya King at Madurai. Villi woke up and acted according to the behest of Vadabhadrasayee. Thus the newly founded place (PUTTUR) by Villi came to be called as SRIVILLIPUTTUR.

VII CHAPTER: Vishnuchitta.

A pious family of Veyar community (Mungilkudi) lived at Srivilliputtur. The parents Mukunda and Padma had four sons. On the command of Lord Vishnu Garuda was born as their fifth son. He was named Vishnuchitta who later came to be called as Periyalvar. We shall deal with this saint in a separate chapter.

VIII CHAPTER: **Andal;**

Vishnuchitta was tending a flower garden and supplying flower-garlands for adorning Periyaperumal. One day when he came to the garden he found a female child under a Tulasi plant. He took her home and brought her up with the name of Kothai, who after

acharya.org

wards came to be called as Andal. This was no other than Bhudevi born as a child in the world as desired by Lord Vishnu. We shall know more about her in a separate chapter. Mention has also been made in this Adyaya of the Shthlamanmya about Godadarpana Theertham (Mirror-well) inthe Nachiar temple. Vishnu Theertham in the Manduha hill, the five Theerthams of Vasishta, Abyaravya, Digbalaka, Absarasa and Vidhadara in the Shenbaga grove. Kannuva or Rengu Theertham in Rengu parvata to the north of Srivilliputtur and Koneri Theertham at the foot of Tiruannamalai hill.

IX CHAPTER:

This chapter gives a summary of the previous chapters and says that those who bath in Tiruveni and worship Vadabhadrasayanar and those who read and hear the Sthalapurana would rid themselves of all sins and attain bliss.

During Chitra poornami garland is sent from Srivilliputtur to Kallalagar and in exchange Parivattam is received at the Perumal temple at Tallakulam, Madurai. Similarly garland is sent to Tirupathi during Purattasi garudeseva and in exchange Parivattam is received

There is a tradition that Kambar the reputed author of the Tail Ramayana came and worshipped at this place and Presented a jewel called CHUTAKAM (சூடகம்). He had also sung a song about the tower in the Vadabhadrasayee's temple which had been inscribed in it.

acharya.org

6. SAINT PERIYALVAR

Traditional accounts current among the devout Sri Vaishnavas place the Alvars at the beginning of Kaliyuga, that is about the second millannium B C. According to the Guruparambara (3000 Padi) the dates of the Alvars range between B. C. 4202 and B.C. 2714. Modern scholars like Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Ayyangar and P. T. Srinivasa Iyyangar have stated that the Alvars should have flourished between the 5th century and 10th century A. D. They have based their conclusion on the literary evidence gathered from the Nalayira Prabhanda, Copper plate grants and inscriptions. Dr. K. C. Varadachari, a reputed professor of philosophy, in his book "Alvars of South India" (A Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan publication) says that the Alvars seem to have flourished between the second century A. D. and the eighth century A. D and that in any case they should have lived before 900 A. D.

There is a difference of opinion among scholars about the date of Saint Periyalvar. K. S. Srinivasa Pillai, a renouned Tamil Scholar of Thanjavour, in his 'History of Tamil Literature (தமிழ் வரலாறு) states that Periyalvar should have lived before 769-770 A. D. Taking two references from the Tiruppavai of Andal (Periyalvar's flaughter) மார்கழித் திங்கள் மதிநிறைந்த நன்னாள் "and" வெள்ளி எழுந்து வியாழம் உறங்கிற்று" as internal evidences. M. Raghava Ayyangar in his book "Age of the Alvars" (ஆழ்வார்கள் காலநிலை) has come to the conclusion that the birth of Andal should have been in 716 A D. Pandit E. M. Subramania Pillai of Sankarankoil fixed the date as 27-11-850 as calculated

acharya.org

Big Gopuram & Car

acharya.org

SRI THIRUMUKKULAM &
TEPPAM FESTIVAL.

acharya.org

from the same astronomical date furnished by the two references in the Tiruppavai. J. S. M. Hooper, M.A., (OXON), the author of "Hymns of the Alvars" states that Periyalvar may be placed about the middle of the ninth century. Having seen so much about the times of Periyalvar and andal we shall proceed to know about the life of the former.

Periyalvar, also known as Vishnuchitta, was born of Brahmin parents at Srivilliputtur. The names of his father and mother are Mukunda and Padma. Vishnuchitta was the fifth son. He married a chaste and beautiful woman by name Vraja. He was naturelly pious and tended a flower garden and devoted him-self to the supplying of flower-garland daily to Vadabhadrasayee. During that time a Pandya King Srivallabhadeva was reigning at Madurai. As wont in those days the King went round the city incognito one night and head one Brahmin on a pial uttering the sloka beginning "Varshartham". The King required him of the meaning of the sloka. The brahmin explained that one should gather things required for the rainy season duriag non-rainy months, those required for night-in the day time, those necessary for old age-in the youth hood and those for the next birth-in this birth. The last part of the sloka captured the mind of the King. He brooded over what that thing should be to be acquired in this birth for the next birth. He requested his Guru, Selvanambi for clarification. The royal preceptor counselled him to arrange for a council of scholars (Vyidvat-Sadas). The king accordingly summoned a council and proclaimed a prise. Scholars

acharya.org

from various parts assembled. Vishnuchitta, as commanded by God in dream went to Madurai through with great diffidence. By the miraculous grace of God he was able to recite and exponnd Thathuvam. Hitham and punsartham from out of the entire Veda in the king's court. By this Narayana is the super God, with whose help we should reach him. He is our gain. The prize, a bag of gold coins came down to Vishnuchitta's hand automatically. He also earned the title of Bhattar Piran. He was taken round in procession on an elephant with all royal honours. Vishnu appeared to him in a vision and the Alvar overwhelmed with the brilliance of the infinite beauty of God, burst out in ecstic prayer that the beauty should be preserved safe and for ever. This is called Tiruppallandu. (Blessed many years). These songs have become univerral and popular and is sung in all temples. Without Thiruppallandu, no other songs can be sung. He returned to Srivilliputtur and with the prize-money he renovated the prakara walls, mantapas and towards in the Periyaperumal temple. He continued his usual worship and enjoyed divine bliss. He sang the wonderful songs called the PERIYALVAR TIRUMOLI. The traditional date of his birth is stated to be Kaliyuga 47 (B. C. 3056), Krodhana year, Ani month, Sukla Paksha, Ekadesi, Sunday, Swathi (Star). It is said that he lived to the ripe old age of eighty-five.

acharya.org

7. SAINT ANDAL

One day for his daily routine of tending plants, gathering flowers and weaving garlands, Periyalvar went into his flower garden. Something dazzled his eyes Lo'. He beheld a beautiful female child under a Tulasi Plant. He took it home Immensely happy over this God-gift the parents brought it up with due care and all kindness. The child was named as KOTHAI meaning flower-garland. What other name can be expect form a devotee who was a weaver of flower garlands. The name in Sanskrit is GOTHA, which means the giver of cows, of light and revelations. It grew up to be a beatiful maiden. From the religious surroundings she naturally imbibed the spirit of devotion to God Vishnu. With her growth the passion or divine love for God also increased It was time that she should be given in marriage. But she refused saying that if there was any proposal of marriage to any human being she won't live. (மானிடவர்க்கு என்று பேச்சுப்பட்ட வாழ் இல்லேன்) She yearned that only God should be her husband She used to beck herself with the garland woven by her father to be supplied to Vadabadrasayee and see her image in the mirror to satisfy whether she would be a worthy spouse of Lord Vishnu. One day her father Vishnuchitta noticed it and rebuked her for this sacrilege. He did uot supply garland that day to the deity Lord appeared in his dream and said that the garland worn by Kothai had more fragrance and that he would prefer only such a garland. Realising the divinity of his daughter he began to supply from that day the garland worn by

acharya.org

her. Therefore she came to be called as SUDIKODUTHA NACHIAR (சூடிக்கொடுத்த நாச்சியார்). The anxiety of the father to get her married still existed. One night in a dream Sri Ranganatha appeared before him and asked him to take her to Srirengam for marriage with him. Accordingly with all paraphernalia she was taken in a palanquin to Srirengam. They reached Srirengam. She enjoyed the exquisite charm of Lord Ranganatha form head to foot and in the presence of all she got absorned in him. Periyalvar returned to Srivilliputtur and continued his usual avocation of tending the flower-garden and supplying garlands. There is another version that Lord Renganatha came to Srivilliputtur and married Kothai on one Panguni Utram day. Hence forth she was called **Andal**, that is, she attained God as her husband. Her pining and burning love for God and her means to get him as her husband and found expression in the songs called TIRUPPAVI AND NACHIAR TIRUMOLI. These have become famous throughout the land and sung in all temples and other places of worship. We find in almost all the Vishnu temple a separate shrine for Andal. In the Sri Vaikunda Nathar Temple in Calcutta and Sri Venkatesaperumal Temple in Bombay there are shrines for Andal. In Brindavanam near Mathura (North India) there is a whole temple dedicated to Andal, a propotype of the one at Srivilliputtur. It is built in Dravidian style. There on the walls of the front Mantapa one can see the thirty songs of Tiruppavi painted with illustrations in attractive colours. Andal had also sung ten stanzas about Brindavanam, which

acharya.org

finds place in the last part of Nachiar Thirumoli As being the only woman Vaishnava saint she had become universally known and her songs very popular. The traditional date of her birth is said to be Kaliyuga 98 (B. C. 3005) Nala yrar, Adi montn, Sukla Paksha Chathurdasi, Tuesday, Pooram (Star). We have already seen that research scholars have fixed her period of existence in the middle of the eighth century A. D. It is stated that Andal lived for fourteen of fifteen years of age.

acharya.org

8. LITERATURE.

NALAYIRA DIVYA PRAPANDA : This is a compilation of songs sung, by the twelve Alvars on the 108 Vaishnava shrines (Divyadesas). Of them Srivilliputtur is one sanctified by two songs, one each by Periyalvar and Andal. The purport of the song of Periyalvar is this :- "Bees enter and create music in the lovely locks of hair of lean-hipped women of Srivilliputtur. Such place you have been pleased to take as your abode. Those who have seen you, say "how fortunate the lady who had given birth of you. O! Krishna! please take milk." In the song of Andal we see the expression of a pining lover. "My fish like eyes do not get sleep on account of my intense desire to see the golden feet of the Lord residing in Srivilliputtur where swans are playing about. Oh! Kohila! please invite the Lord who measured the world to come. I will give you for friendship the parrot tended by me with milk and rice."

THIRUPPALLANDU : These are twelve songs by Periyalvar. When he was taken round in procession on an elephant at Madurai he had a vision of Lord Vishnu on His clestial Vehicle, Garuda He burse out paying that the infinite beauty of God should remain safe for ever. Pallandu sings but requests other to join him in singing the praise of the Lord. These songs are sung not only in all the Vishnu temples but also at some ceremonies in the houses of Vaishnavites. He refers to the king of Madurai as a Abhimanatungan. A translation of the first verse by J. S. M. Hooper is given below :-

acharya.org

"Reverence, reverence be unto thee. O thou Mighty One who didst overcome the mallas, thou like to the sapphire in glory !

Infinitely blest be the beauty of Thy holy feet for many years, for thousands of years, for crores of years, for ever "

Periyalvar Tirumoli : There are 461 stanzas divided into five sections called Pathu or decade. These fiive sections have again been divided into 43 sub-sections Periyalvar is an ardent admirer of Krishnavatara. His devout devotion to Sri Krishna is best brought out in these songs. He enjoys singing the childish pranks of Sri Krishna assuming himself the rule of His Mother, Yasoda. In addition to some South Indian sacred places he also makes mention of holy places in North India like Badrinath, Saligram, Ayodhya, Mathura, Gokulam, Govardhan and Dwaraka. We also find him referring to Pandya King by two names Abhimanatungan and Nedumaran which were taken into consideration by research scholars to fix the date of Periyalvar.

Thiruppavai : This consists of thirty songs by Andal and has become universal and popular. These are sung through out the length and breadth of the country on all the thirty days of the Tamil month of Margali at the rate of one song a day. Centuries ago Thiruppavai of Andal and Thiruvempavai of Manikkavachaka had gone across the seas and used in a national festival in Siam which still survives. Periavachan Pillai, the prince of Commentators has stated that the Thiruppavai is a necklace of gems of for Sri Krishna all blended in one harmonious whole.

acharya.org

Once when Sri Ramanuja was requested to give the meaning of Thiruppavai he is stated to have replied that one could find a commentator for Thiruppallandu but not for Thiruppavai. Because Thiruppallandu was sung in praise of Lord, weile Thiruppavai in praise of Bhakthas. In fact he preferred to call himself as THIRUPPAVAI JEEYAR though he had other names as Udaiyavar, Emperumanar, Yathirajar and Bhashya-karar. There is a story to testify to his great attachment for Thiruppavi. Daily he used to go about begging for alms, singing Thiruppavai songs. One day he went to his Guru Periya Nambi's house singing the eighteenth song beginning "Unthu Mathakalitran" (உந்துமதகளிற்றன்). The door of the house was shut. Just when he was reciting the concluding portion of the song "Nappinnai! Please open the door with your lotus hand with the jingling of the bangles." (செந் தாமரைக் கையால் சீரார் வளையொலிப்ப வந்து திறவாய்) The door was opened by the daughter of Periyanambi. Sri Ramanuja was so absorbed in his song that he took Periyanambi's daughter as Nappinnai, Sri Krishna's consort and prostrated before her. In memorary of this incident the eighteenth song is used to be recited twice in temples. So it was that Thiruppavai exercised a fascination over the mastermind of Sri Ramanuja. Mahan Aurobindo in an article on Andal States "It would seem as if this human symbol-God becoming the Laver-were the natural culminating point for the mounting flame of the soul's devotion." The songs of Thiruppavai are simple and at the same time sublime and appeal to all people irrespective of their stated as in society and so have claimed universal admiration.

acharya.org

Its spiritual depth, musical beauty, melifluous flow, sweet rym, haunting melody, philosophic content and mystic import are some of the virtues which have raised it to rank among the master-pieces of devotional literature.

There is a popular verse by Vevapiran Bhattar saying that those men who do not know the thirty songs of Thiruppavai are a useless burden to mother earth (கோதை தமிழ் ஐயைந்தும் ஐந்தும் அறியாத மானிடரை வையம் சுமப்பதும் வம்பு) Thiruppavai is a poem of spiritual romance and divine love. It is vividly and charmingly portrays the observance of an ancient custom. PAVAI NONBU, among youthful maidens. It is a prayer for good husbands for themselves (Anmartha) and timely copious rains (Parartha) for the prosperity of the country at large. Andal imagines Srivilliputtur as Gokula, the maidens there as Gopis, herself as one of them, the temple of Vadabhadrasayee as Nandagopa's mansion and Sri Krishna as sleeping in it. A complete translation of the thirty songs of Thiruppavai by the late R. Seshadri Ayyangar, B. A , B L., Advocate, Ramanathapuram is appended. A gist of it is given hereunder.

The first song is a call to the maidens of Aypadi (Gokula) for a divine both during early dawn, their supreme object being to reach Lord Krishna. The second verse lays down conditions for observing their vow. The third and fourth stanzas contain a prayer to God for bestowing their country with prosperty and wealth and seasonal rains. The fifth song denotes that

acharya.org

those who pray to him with the purity of body and mind will get redemption from their sins. Hymns 6 to 15 describe how the maidens who have already gathered go from door to door and awaken others whe are still asleep. Stanzas 16 to 22 narrate how the company of midens try to awaken Krishna after rousing the gatekeeper first, then Nandagopa and Yasoda. Balarama, Nappinai or Radha and at last Krishna. In song 23 they request for Krishna's angust presence in the audience hall and hear their prayer. Stanza 24 praises His glories and stanza 25 signifies that He is their only final goal. In hymn 26 ther list out what they want and in 27 they explain the penefits they expect In the next stanza (28) they express that they are fortunate in His having been born in their cowhead community. Verse 29 declares the superemn realisation by absolute self-surrender. In the last stanza (30) Andal speaks in person and promises that those who sing her thirty songs will get the blessings of the Lord, similar to the mother cow readily groving milk even at the sight of false calf. The allegory behind these songs is that those who rouse are perfect souls having got rid of their impurities, that those who sleep are imperfect souls with ego, that awakening is only attaining divine knowledge and that the final bath is nothing but an immersion in the ocean of Lord's grace. The refrain at the end of each song "Elorambavay" has got several meanings. "Receive and ponder what I say, O Lady"- El (ஏல) Vor (ஓர்), Embavay (எம்பாவாய்) - is one interpretation. Another suggestion is "Hail, O thou unique lady!" A translation of the 30th song by J. S. M. Hooper is given below :

acharya.org

"To Madhavan who churned the navied deep
To Kesavan, the moon-faced Jewelled maids
Went and obeisance did, and gained their drum!
This wreath, these thirty (Sung in classic verse
By Godai, Puduvai Pattarpiran's
With, cool fresh lotus garlands) They who say
unfailing, everywhere shall gain from Mal
His arms like mountains four, his face kind-Eyed,
And wealthy Lakshmi by Him) Sacred grace
And bliss enjoy! Ah! Elorembavay!

Nachiar Tirumoli: This is the other composition of Andal containing 143 verses in 14 sections. She invokes Kamadeva (God of Love) to help her in her love for Lord Vishnu. Assuming hereself as a little girl she begs the Lord along with other girls not to destroy their small houses made of sand. She prays to Krishna with her companions to give back their clothes stolen from them She expresses her desire for union with God. She requests the kuyil (Kohila bird) to call her Lord. She narrated to her maiden-friend her grand marriage with God as dreamt by her. She enlogises the conch (Panchajanya) which has the unique fortune of having contact with the Lord's lotus mouth. She sends the clouds to the Lord of the Venkata hills with the message of her desire to become His consort. (A translation of the ten songs of "Mehaviduthuthu" by the eminent scholar Thiru P. Sri Acharya is appended for the information of the reader). She worships the Lord of Tirumalirunjolai (Alagarkoil). She appeals to flower, birds, rains, sea and her maiden-friend to help her to unite with the

acharya.org

Lord. She gives out her burning love for Gold Renganatha. She dedicates the last ten songs to Srindhavan, the sacred place of Lord Krishna. To quote Dr. K. C. Veradachari "This Tirumoli is a study in repture-rapture of contemplation, meditation, concentric and conscious, and absorption in the beauty of God".

Godha Sthudhi: It is a Sanskrit work by the great Vaishnava Acharya Sri Vedantadesikar singing the glories of Andal. It mentions that the idol of Sri Renganatha taken by Vibishana from Ayodhya to Lanka was pleased to take its abode at Srirangam only for hearing Andal's Songs.

Gotha Parinaya Shambu: Vedadhinatha Kesara Bhatta Charya composed this literature in Sanskrit regarding Andal's holy marriage.

Chathuslogy: was composed by one Anand Alwan. The fore poems in Sanskrit speak about Andal's fame.

Villiputtur Vilakku: (Light of Srivilliputtur). This book in Tamil by Pandithai S. Krishnaveni Ammal of Madras has been published by the Nachiar Devasthanam. It gives a full account of Andal's life and elaborately discusses the contents of Thiruppavai and Nachiar Tirumoli.

Thiruppavai Viyagyanam: Mayilai Madhavadasnan (M. Balasubramania Mudaliar, B.A , B.L., of Mylapore, Madras) has published an edition of Thiruppavai with the old commentaries and has also added a very useful appendices after much labour and research.

acharya.org

SATHAKI

acharya.org

NRRUDDA MUKHA VEERABHADRAN

acharya.org

Chandra Kalamalai : This is Tamil work of 16 stanzas by one Villi, a soliya Vaishnavite.

Other works in prose : "Sri - Villiputtur Sthala Varalaru" by pandit, Thiru E. M. Subramania Pillai of Sankarankoil, "Srivilliputtur Sthala Manmyam" by Thiru P K. Shanmuganathan, B A., B. L., Advocate, Dindigul and "Srivilliputtur Puranam" by Saptha Bhasha Panditha, Thiru Ramanuja Dasar deserve mention. The first two have been published by the Nachiar Devasthanam.

acharya.org

9. PUJAS AND FESTIVALS.

Daily Puja in Andal temple: This temple will be open from 6 A. M. to 12 Noon and from 5 P. M. to 9 P. M. On Friday it will be kept open till 10 P. M. Daily at 6 A. M. sacred water (Theertham) will be brought on an elephant from Tirumukkulam tank to the accompaniment of Nadaswaram. This pujas are performed according to Vaikanasar Agama. Every day the figure of a parrot made of ever-green fragrant leaves is adorned in the hand of Andal which is a special feature. It will appear as a life-parrot.

There are Six Pujas daily as given below:

1. 6-30 A. M. to 7-00 A. M. Viswarupam–Recitation of Suprapatham and Godha Sthuthi.
2. 8-00 A. M. to 10-00 A. M. - Kalasanthi.
3. 12-00 Noon – Utchikalam–Purnapathram.
4. 6-00 P. M - Sayarakshai.
5. 8-30 P. M. - Athalam.
6. 9-00 P. M - Aravanai (Friday 10-00 P. M)

Weekly: Every Friday morning between 8-30 A. M. and 10-00 A. M Andal and Rangamannar will have their ablution (Abishekam) in the Tirumanchanakuradu. At 5-00 P. M. Andal alone will be taken round the prakara after which there will be swinging (Unchal) for both Andal and Rengamannar in the Sukravarakuradu.

Monthly: During the two Ekadesis in the month both deities will be taken to Ekadesi Mantapa after Kalasanthi at 10-00 A. M. and there they will have

acharya.org

their ablution. After evening Puja they will be brought back to their original place (Asthanam) with chorus singing of "Thiruvasiriyam".

On the **Tiruppooram** day-natal star of Andal-both the deities will have ablution at 10 A.M. in the unchal mantapa. At 4-00 P. M. Andal alone will be taken to Tiruppoora Mantapa in the garden, her birth place and after Aradhanam and recitation of Tiruppallandu, Thiruppavai and Nachiar Tirumoli, she will be taken back to Asthanam.

On the day of **Revathi** Star both the deities will have their Tirumanchanam and Tiruvaradhanam. In the evening after Puja Rangamannar alone will be taken round in the inner prakara with Chorus singing of "Chiriya Thirumandal".

Daily Puja in Vadabhadrasayee temple :

1. 7-30 A. M. - Viswapuram - The Garland of Andal will be taken to adorn Periya Perumal
2. 9-30 A. M. - Kalasanthi.
3. 10-00 A M. - Absishekam at Periyalvar Sannidhi- Thiruppallandu and Thiruppavai Goshti.
4. 11-00 A. M. - Utchikalam.
5. 6-30 P. M. - Sayarakshai.
6. 8-00 P. M. - Athalam
7. 8-30 P. M. - Artha Jamam.

Panchaparvam: On the first day of Tamil month. Amavasa and Tiruvonam there will be abishekam for Periyaperumal in the morning and in the night after

acharya.org

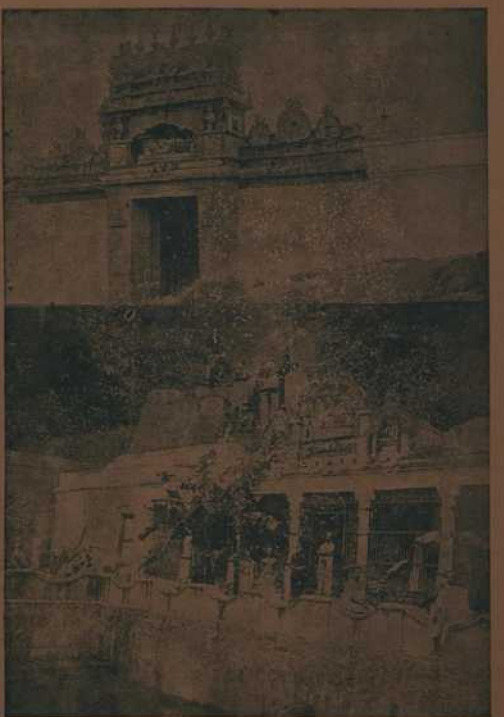
8 P M. Vadabhadrasayee will be taken round in the prakara with chorus singing "Thiru Elzu Kootrirukai" and after Periyalvar's mangalasasanam will go to Asthanam. On the day of Swathi (Star) Periyalvar will be taken round the prakara to Periyaperumal's Sannidhi with chorus singing of "Chiryia Thirumadal" and after mangalasasanam reach Asthanam.

Srivilliputtur is one of the few temples in the south having festivals all the year round. No month goes without a festival. The most important festivals are Adi Pooram, Margali Thailakappu and Panguni Tirukalyanam. A short account of the festivals celebrated every Tamil month is given below :-

Chitrai : (April - May) Vasantha Utsavam - 10 days During the evenings of the first nine days Andal and Rengamannar will be taken to Neerali Mantapa and back. On the tenth day. Chitra Pournami (full moon) Andal on Sesha Vahana and Rengamannar on Horse Vahana will be taken round the four car streets in the morning to the river and then back to the temple.

Vaikasi : (May - June) Vasantha Utsavam - 10 days. For the first nine days Andal and Rengamannar will be taken to the mantapa in the Natakasalai street during the evenings. There will be recitation of Sri Vedanta Desikar's Godha Sthuthi. On the tenth day (Pournami) there will be abishekam for Andal and Rengamannar in the morning and in the evening there will be a special offering (Naivedya) called "Pal Mankai" which is a mixture of mango, Coconut and plantain with milk.

acharya.org



SRI ALAGAR TEMPLE &
NUPURA GANGA

acharya.org

Ani: (June - July) Periyalvar's Brahma Utsavam 10 days ending with Swathi, the natal star of Periyalvar. On all the ten days Periyalvar will be taken round the streets both in the mornings and evenings on dirrecent Vahanas (Vehicles). On the ninth day there will be car festival. On the tenth day morning Periyalvar will be taken to the Tirumukkulam tank and after actual immersion in the water there will be Tiruaradhanam in the Theerthavarai Mantapa. He will be taken back at 12 Noon and after mangalasasanam in Andal's and Periyaperumal's Sannidhis will reach Asthanam. That night there will be a special offering of "Muppazham" (three fruits)

Adi: (July – August) Thiru Adi Poorm festival 10 days. On all there days in both morinings and nights Andal and Rengamannar will be taken round the streets on different vehicles. On the night of the fifth festival Andal and Periyalvar on Hamsa (swan) Vahanas and Rengamannar, Periyaperumal, Srinivasan Sundararajan and Tiruttangal Appan on Garuda vahanas will be taken in procession. On the seventh day (Andal and Rengamannar) will be taken to Krishnankoil where there will be Sayana Tirukolam (Sleeping posture) and with return during night. On the nineth day is the car festival. It is one of the biggest Cars in South India. It will be a grand sight to see the great car being dragged round the streets which will take some days. On all the festival days there will be religious lectures, music parties and special Nadaswaram. Of course there will be regular recitation of Divya Prapanda Songs in all festivals.

acharya.org

Avani: (August - September) Tirupavitra Utsavam in Periakoil. 7 days festival begins from Sukla Paksha Ekadesi. Periyaperumal will be taken round the inner streets only in the evenings. On the seventh day Periyaperumal on Garuda Vahana and Perialvar on elephant Vahana will come round. In Krishnankoil the days festival celebrated with Rohini the nadal star of Lord Krishna falling on the nineth day of the Car festival On all the ten days Krishna will be taken round the temple both in the morning and evening On the seventh day Krishna with Devis will be taken to Andalkoil where there will be Sayana Tirukolam (Sleeping posture).

Srijayanthi: This is Sri Krishna's birth day festival. Andal and Rengamannar in one Vahana and Sri Krishna in Punnai Vahana will come round the four streets during that night. On the next day is the uriadi festival.

Purattasi: (September - October) Brahma Utsavam in Vadaperumkoil for ten days. The deity will be taken round the streets both mornings and nights on different vehicles. Car festival is celebrated on the nineth day that is on Tiruvonam star.

Navarathri: Festival will be celebrated in the Andal temple for nine days. On the tenth day (Vijayadasami) Rengamannar will go on house-vehicle for Pari Vettai.

Aippasi: (October - November) For six days prior to Tirupooram there will be swinging festival for Andal and Rengamannar. Periyaperumal's unchal festival is

acharya.org

celebrated on Pournami day. On the night prior to Deepavali day Andal, Rengamannar and Vadabhadrasayee will have their Thaila Abishekam On the night of Deepavali all deitis will be taken to Andal's Sannithi where they will be adorned with new clothes (Pachaivadam).

Karthigai: (November - December) On the day of Kaicika Ekadesi (Suklapaksha Ekadesi) Andal and Rengamannar will be taken to Vadaperunkoil and there with Vadabhadrasayee, Sridevi, Bhudevi, and Alvars will have Thiru Aradhanam, Goshti, adorning of 108 Shawls, Vyagyanam by Araiyar and discourse of Kaisika Puranam by Vedapiran Bhatter. After Nitya Utsavam to Periyalvar on the next day (Dwadesi all deitis will return to Asthanam.

On the day of Tirukarthigai (Pournami) Andal, Rengamannar and Periyaperumal will be taken out and in front of the two Sannidhis the burning of chokkapanai will be celebrated.

Margali: (December – January) *Tiru Adyayana Utsavam*:- For ten days prior to Vaikunta Ekadesi Pahal Pathu (பகல் பத்து) festival will be celebrated Andal, Rengamannar, Periyaperumal with ubaya Nachiars, Alwars and Acharyars are taken to Gopalavilasam.

Pahal Pathu: Is also called Tirumoli Tirunal (திருமொழி திருநாள்) and it is celebrated in the Gopalavilasamatapa in the first floor of Periyaperumal temple. The first

acharya.org

2000 songs in the Divya Prapanda will be recided by chorus sinsing with Araiyar's Vyagyanam and Abhinayam.

On the Vaikunta Ekadesi day Andal, Rengamannar and Periyraperumal will be taken out and the Paramapadha vasal will be opened.

Ira Pathu festival is celebrated during the ten days begining with Ekadesi and is called Tiruvaimoli Tirunal (திருவாய்மொழித் திருநாள்). This is celebrated in the Ira pattu Mantapa in the north prakara of Periyaperumal temple. During these ten days there will be recitation of the entire Tiruvaimoli of Nammalvar at the rate of ten decades per day by chorus singing with Araiyar Vyagyanam and Abhinayam. On the eleventh day 1000 songs (இயற்பா சாதுமுறை) of the first three Alvars and the other Alvars will recited by goshti.

Margali Nirattu or Ennaikappu Utsavam: This is a very important festival celebrated with grandeur during the last seven days of the Tamil month of Margali. This is connected with Pavai Nonbu (Vow) immortalised in Andal's famous Thiruppavai songs. This takes place in the Ennaikappu Mantapa on the bank of Tirumukklam tank. Ennaikappu is oil-both

Thai: (January-February) On the first day of this month Andal will be taken in golden palanquin in the morning In the evening there will be mangalasasanam of Manavala Mamunigal. Then there will be swinging (Unchal) and harvest festivals With the recitation of

acharya.org

"Kudarai Vellunjeer" (கூடாரை வெல்லுஞ்சீர்) 27th song of Thiruppavai - the festival of this day will close. On the second day of this month Andal will be taken to Periyalvar's Sannidhi in the evening (Kanu festival) and that night there will be Muthukuri (முத்துக்குறி) in Andal's Sannidhi.

Masi: (February - March) There will be floating festival in Tirumukkulam tank for three days beginning from poornima First day's float will be for Andal and Rengamannar, second day for Periyaperumal, Periyalvar and Srinivasan and the third day for Ramasamy, Krishnan and Sundararajan.

Panguni: (March – April) There will be regular festival for ten days. On the nineth day, that is Panguni Uthram, there will be car festival in the morning and Tirukalyanam (Marriage) in the night

The Devasthanam publishes a pamphlet giving detailed information regarding daily occurrences in the temple for a whole year, monthwar, beginning from the Tamil month of Chitrai. Special notices are also issued for Adi Pooram, Purattasi, Margali - Neerattu, Tiru Adyayanam and floating festivals.

acharya.org

10. ARCHITECTURE AND SCULPTURE.

The two temples of Vadabhadrasayee and Andal are among the few temples of South India noted for their architectual grandeur and sculptural beauty.

We shall first see about their **architectural** importance. We have already seen that Periyalvar and Andal hailed during the middle of the eighth century A. D. The Pandya King Nedunjadayan Parantakan ruled at Madurai from A. D. 765 to 790. Pandya Kings as a rule are followers of Saivism. But according to the Seerarmangalam Copper plate grant this King is mentioned as a "Parama Vaishnava". He should have been the patron of Periyalvar, who won the prise in the council of scholars assembled by him at Madurai. From the life-story of Periyalvar it is seen that he reared a flower-garden and supplied flower-garlands to the God of Vadaperunkoil. It is therefore evident that Vadabhadrasayee's temple existed prior to eighth century A. D It is also older than Andal temple. We have seen that Periyalvar renovated the gopuras. mandapas and prakara walls with the prise-money he got at Madurai. The enterance to the temple is adorned with a beautiful tower. It is one of the tallest Gopuras in South India, its height being 196 feet There is a Tamil verse inscribed in the tower itself commemorating its greatness It is said that it can be compared to Mount Meru alone and nothing else. The verse is attributed to the famous poet Kambar, the author of the Tamil Ramayana, as having been sung at the time, he visited this temple. One inscription mentions that the Pandya King Kulasekhara

acharya.org

built the Vadaperunkoil temple walls, in 1536 A. D. From an inscription in the Dwajasthambha (Flag staff) it is revealed that the flag-staff and a car were the endowments made by one Thirugnanasambandam Pillai Son of Kaikattia Pillai in the Saka year 1622 (A D. 1700) From another inscription in the west Gopura of the same temple of the Saka year 1637 (A. D 1715), it is seen that it was built by Tadhiyaradhanam Tirumalaiyappangar. To reach the sanctum-sanctorum of Vadabhadrasayee one has to ascend some steps from the south side of the inner prakar. God Periyaperumal blessess His devotees in His reeumbent posture under what is called the "Vimalakruti Vimana". We have seen the Villi, a hunter-chief found out among shrubs under a great banyan tree God Vadabhadrasayee and erected a temple for Him and created a town around it. As regards Andal temple we should say that it is definitely of a later origin. The Sthalapurana says that the place was originally the residence of Periyalvar and in support of it the deity Lakshmi-narayana worshipped by him is shown in the south-eastern corner of the inner prakara. The antiquity of the construction of this shrine testified to this statement. After Andal's absorption with Sri Renganatha, Periyalyar returned from Srirangam to Srivilliputtur and erected a temple housing Andal, Rengamannar and Garuda and endowed all his property to the temple. He was the first trustee of the temple and he used to render accounts to Andal. This is celebrated on the seventh day of Adi Pooram festival as "measuring paddy" at the mantapam in

acharya.org

front of Yanai-mahal in the north mada street. From an inscription of A. D. 973 it is disclosed that arrangements had been made for morning worship and offerings both in Andal and Vadaperunkoil. It has therefore to be taken that Andal temple existed prior to the tenth century. The three deities are housed under what is called the "Pranavakruthi Vimana". Subsquently the temple had extensions and renovations during the temes of Pandya, Chola and Nayak Kings. In the 15th century somewhere about A. D. 1453 a chieftain by name Sundaratoludaiya Sarvabhauma Mavali Vanadhirayan constructed the Garbagraha Artha mantaba and Mahamandapa in the Andal temple and there are inscriptions in the temple in support of it.

Having seen something about the architecture of the two temples we shall proceed to know about the sculptural beauty in them. The first thing that strikes one on entering Andal temple is the monolithic pillar sculptures in the Dwajasthabha mantapa. There are ten figures, five on either side of the flag-staff.

THESE ARE DESCRIBED BELOW:

(1) **Venugopalan**: Tribangi (Silpalakshanam) Sri Krishna playing on the flute with his fingers is very graceful. Two hands engaged with the flute and two hands with conch (Sankha) and Disc (Chakra) remined the incornation of Sri Krishna. The pose of left leg in front and right leg behind adds beauty to the figure. Fluttering of Uthareeyam (Upper cloth) on the side is specially attractive.

acharya.org

VENUGOPALAN

acharya.org

LAKSHMANA

acharya.org

(2) **Visvakarma**: Carpenter of the Heavens or Deva Thacha or Mayan. Hammer in his right hand and chisel in his left denote his profession. He is having four hands. It represents Vishnu Amsa being in a Vishnu temple and is of special significance. The like of which cannot be found in any other Vishnu temple.

(3) **Natana Madhu**: Dancing woman. Tere are two figures in this pillar, one big and one small in size. The big (Woman) figure appears to decorate the small figure making ready for dance. On the left side behind is the Nattuvan, the director of the dance. The big figure is having a boquet in its right hand.

(4) **Jalandar**: Jalandrasura, the demon There is conch in his head and a sword in his right hand. There is a chain in his right leg. This demon has connection with the story of Tulsi-Brindha.

(5) **Mohini**: Damsal of bewitching charm. This represents the story of the sages of Daruhavana. The figures of sages are seen below. On the right side behind is the Gangalanathar with drum (Udukkai or Damarugam) in his hand. The two sides of the hip of Mohini are very beatiful. A parrot is perching on the right hand with chinmudra

(6) **Sakthi**: She is in a dancing pose, raising her right hand and having a drident in her left hand. It is interesting to note that only four toes exept the Big one of each leg touch the ground.

acharya.org

(7) **Agoraveerabhadra**: It is one form of god Siva. He is wearing a garland of skulls. His right leg rests on a dumeer's head. The sword in his right hand touches the ground and the shield on his left is held aloft

(8) **Kalaivani**: Saraswathi or Goddess of Learning. It is an extremely beautiful figure, a fine specimen of sculptural finish. The yazh (Musical instrument) is held by both hands, We see Saraswathi generally with four arms But here there are only two, which is unusual. The most important thing to be noted in this figure is chathur bangam or having four bends in the form from head to foot. The nose and the big toe are in a perpendicular line The figure is of a high sculptural technique.

(9) **Sri Rama**: Holding a big bow on his left hand and resting the arrow on the ground by his right hand the figure is a charming one to look at. To show that he is a Kshatriya (Warrior) he is having a moustache.

(10) **Lakshmana**: Clutching the hair of the demon-woman by his left hand and cutting her breast with the sword in his right hand is what is called Surpanaka Bhankam (Mutilation of surpanaka's parts) She is seen seizing Lakshmana's sword. Some say it is Ayomukhi's Chethana.

Now we go to the Ekadesi mantapa just to the north and adjoining the flag-staff mantapa. Here there are eight figures in monolithic pillars four on either sidu, A description of each is given hereunder.

acharya.org

(1) **Manmatha**: Mamadeva or the God of Love or cupid. Parrot is his vehicle, sugar-cane is his bow, chain of beetless is the rope for the bow and flowers are his arrows. Kama's eyes do not fall on Rathidevi, his consort, on the opposite side This figure is on a four-wheeled mandapa.

(2) **Urdhvamukha Veerabhadran**: He is fully decorated with ornaments. Both ends of his monstache below Lifting his right leg a little and placing it just on the side of his left leg are a special feature in this figure

(3) **Guha**: Hunter-boat-man. We she below the figure of a woman carrying a pot. Guha is having a bent blowing instrument on his left shoulder.

(4) **Gandeepan**: Arjuna, the hero of Maha-Bharatha. He is having a beard. It is the pose of performing penance for getting the pasupathastra from God Siva.

(5) **Karna**: He is having the Nagapana and Kavachakundala in his hand. He is wearing the jingling bells (Salangai) on both his legs.

(6) **Sathyaki**: Sri Krishna's porther and his charioteer. The unique speciality is that in no other Vishnu temple we have the figure of Sathyaki.

(7) *Nrruddhamukha Veerabhadhran*: Sword on one hand and shield on the other are found in this figure.

acharya.org

In the shield there is the figure of Muyalagan of one inch thickness. The lotuses in the shield are exquite pieces of workmanship.

(8) **Rathi Devi:** Cupid's wife. She is seated on a Hamsa (Swan). She holds a boquet on her right hand A parrot perching on her elbow just attempts to prick with its bill. The hip is very beautiful. In her left hand there is a mirror. Her right leg is on the back of the Swan and her left on the stirrup. We see in this figure the hand of the sculptory in all his deterity.

The manimandapa in front of the Mahamantapa is a fine workmanship in stone and appears as wodden work. The statue of Tirumalai Nayak with his consorts in the Mahamantapa is very attractive. Just below the Vimanam in Andal temple the figures in Suthai (சுதை) depicting the scenes contained in the thirty songs of Thiruppavai are worth seeing. The roofing in wood of the Gopalavilsam in the Vadabhadrasayee temple is of exquisite beauty The wooden made conopy above Vishavaksena or Senai Mudaliar in the Andal temple reminds one of the reference of "Madhavi Pandal" in one Thiruppavai song.

Temple Car : The wooden made car of this temple is one of the biggest in South India. It is a gigantic structure and at the same time of sculptural fineness and finish It contains sculptures depicting some scenes from the epies. In an iron ring in the car with which the rope for dragging is used to be attached the following are inscribed in Tamil - "Kollam 1025,

acharya.org

Saumya year Avani month, 14th day". This corresponds to 28th August 1849. So the car is now 121 years old. It was a gift by the then Sri Vanamamalai Jeeyar Swamigal made at a cost of about one lakh of rupees. What should be its cost at the present day only.

By the use of machine-power supplementing man-power, as was done recently in dragging the temple car at Tiruvarur, the great car of this temple can be dragged without much difficulty. The car festival is one in which all people can partake without distinction of caste, creed or race.

Apart from this big car there is another "Goratha" (கோரதம்) for use in other festivals donated by Ethirajulu Naidu, Zamindar of Kakkivadampatti.

Paintings: We have already mentioned about the colour paintings on the walls of the inner prakara of Andal shrine depicting the 108 Divya desas. On the ceiling of the Tirukalyana Mantapa there are paintings of the scenes from the Ramayanam.

acharya.org

11. INSCRIPTIONS.

The two temples of Vadabhadrasayanar and Andal in Srivilliputtur are not only of architectural grandeur and sculptural splendour but also of epigraphical importance and value. The epigraphical department has taken copies of the inscriptions in both the temples and numbered them as 531 to 590 of 1925. There are sixty Tamil inscriptions, 32 (Nos. 531 to 562) in Vadaperunkoil and 28 (Nos. 563 to 590) in Andal temple These are found in the two towere, flag-staff, walls of the central shrine and Mantapa in front of it in the former temple and on the walls of the central shrine, front Mantapa and slabs in the latter temple. One of them is in Tamil Vattelethu (தமிழ் வட்டெழுத்து). The inscriptions belong to Pandya, Chola, Vijayanagar, Nayak and Travancore Kings The dates noted are invariably of the Saka year. In one Travancore King's inscription the kollam year is mentioned. One interesting feature is that words on Nalayira Divya Prabanda are used in some of these inscriptions. One inscription is in Tamil verse found under the big tower enlogising its magnificence and comparing it to Mount Meru, The verse is attributed to the great poet Kambar.

The inscriptions date from the 10th to 18th century A. D The names of Pandya Kings found are Konerinmaikondan, Kulasekhara, Sundara Veera, Parakrama and Vikrama Only one inscription belongs to the period of Chola King Kulottunga. Two inscriptions are of Udaiyamartanda Varman, King of

acharya.org

Travancore. The names of Sadasiva Raya, Saluva Narasimha Udaiyar and Rama Raya, Kings of Vijayanagar and Veerappa Nayak, King of Madurai are also mentioned. The name of a Chieftain Mavali Vanadhi Raja also occurs in some inscriptions. Most of the inscription belong to Pandya Kings.

Srivilliputtur is mentioned as a Brahmadeya Village in Tirumalli Nadu. The Brahmin suburb of this village became decolonised and the Pandya King granted some additional lands and named it as "Saranai Vendra Pandya Chathur Vedimangalam" (சேரனை வென்ற பாண்டிய சதுர் வேதிமங்கலம்). During Chola rule Srivilliputtur was "Vikramachola Chathur Vedimangalam" in Malli Nadu, a sub division of Madurantaka Valanadu, a division of Rajaraja Pandya Nadu. At one time the western side of Srivilliputtur was constituted as a separate village called "Vishnuchitta Vilagam" apparently after the name of Periyalvar and classified as tax-free Devadana Village.

The names of deities are noted as Sudikodutha Nachiar, Nachiar, Kothaipiratti, Vadaperunkoil Paramaswami, Pallikondarullia Paramaswami, Vadaperunkoil Alvar, Vadaperunkoil Kanvalarndarulia Paramaswamigal and Jalasayanattukidantharulia Perumal etc., Sri Madurapathi Alvar, Tiruvayodhi Vinnagar Alvar, Srivallabha Vinnagar Alvar, Srirama Vinnagar Alvar, Alagia Manavala Perumal, Tirumalirunjolai Ninrarulia Paramaswami and Tirukarrliswaram Udaiyar (Siva temple of Vaidyanathaswami) are some of the temples referred to as existing within the limits

acharya.org

of Srivilliputtur. One Sankaranarayana Vajapeyajiyar had erected in the western portion of Srivilliputtur a temple for Bhagavati Vinnagar Alvar also called as Idarkedutta Perumal (இடர்கெடுத்த பெருமாள்). We have already seen that Mavali Vanadhi Raja built the garbagragha, Arthamantapa and Maha mantapa in the Andal temple and Tadiyaradhanam Tirumalaiappangar constructed the west gopura in Vadaperunkoil. The Pandya King Kulasekhara built the prakara wall (Tirumadil) in Saka 1458 (1536 A.D) in Vadaperunkoil. One Tirugnanasambandam Pillai donated the flag-staff and car in Saka 1622 (1700 A. D.)

The inscription give a fund of information regarding lands, villages, sheep, cows, money granted for offerings, worship and festivals in the two temples, the administration of the temple, the names of kings, chiefs and other who made the donations, the names of divisions and sub-divisions in the country, the several kinds of tenures of lands, the repairs to temple, the maintenance of flower-garden, the reduction of tax, the provision of food for Brahmins, the remission of taxes. the burning of perpetual lamps etc.

The divisions and sub-divisions of the country as revealed by these inscription are Rajaraja Pandya Nadu, Vadatalai Sembi Nadu, Tirumalli Nadu, Kilkalakkuru Nadu, Konda Nadu, Maduordaya Valanadu, Tiruvaludi Nadu, Sayavioda Valanadu, Kilaikurram, Maduranta Valanadu Malaimandalam, Jayatunga Nadu, Mutta Nadu, Veeranarayana Valanadu, Pangalanadu, Tiruvannamalai Deva-

acharya.org

JALANDAR

acharya.org

URDHVAMUKHA VEERABHADRA

acharya.org

mandalam, Sengudi Nadu etc., These divisions appear to have been called in latter days as "Sirmai" (சீர்மை) much as Nadumandalam Sirmai, Cholakulanthan Sirmai, Kambikudi Nangur Sirmai etc., We find mention of a large number of villages. These are Kothaipiratti parru, Valaikulam Mudikondacholapuram Pillaiporattankulam, Ganagaikondam, Sattaneri, Ravikulam, Parantakanallur, Chettipalam, Vishnuchitta-vilagam, Perungulam, Sattanur, Kariyur, Tirukanaper (Kalaiyarkoil). Kambikudi, Tanjikudi, Nangur, Kilakattur, Kulythipamangalam, Vayyur Nauamaram, Malavarayanparru, Tiralıparru, Mangudi alias Sundarattonallur, Athmangalam, Puliyankulam (as lying between Nilaiyur and Kappalur). Kidarattur, Uttamapandyanallur, Melaikodumalur, Kilaitirumalai, Valliyur, Kilaisallikulam, Maraputtur, Kudanthai (Kumbakonam) Kilikondanallur, Narraikodu, Tidiyan alias Tiruvaranganallur, Chockanedal etc , Maney of these villages exist even now with the same names. The name of the river Mulli also occurs.

It will not be out of place to mention here a few important inscriptions. One inscription mentions that the pandya King Konerinmaikondan granted the Brahmadeya of Srivilliputtur for the conduct of 122 Vruthis (வருத்தி) to those proficient in Vedas, Jyothisha Ramayana and Mahabharata and to musicians, dancers, blacksmiths and carpenters. Another speaks of the grant of lands for expounding the Ramayana and Mahabharata. An inscription of the time of king Sundara Pandya relates to the gift of Pillaiporuthankulam in Gangaikondan village in Saka 1469 (1547 A.D.)

acharya.org

to met the expenses for carrying out the annual repairs to Andal temple The inscription of the Travancore King Udayamartan of Kollam year 709 (1534 A. D) narrates that while he was staying in the house of Saiva Sikamani Bhattar at Valliyur he granted the villages of Chettipallam and Parantakanallur for conducting the service called "Veeramartan Sandi", for the special festival on the day of Svathi in the temple of the Goddess Sudikodutta Nachiar at Srivilliputtur and for the feeding of 33 Brahmins daily in the mutt called Veeramartan Mutt alias Tiruvenkatathan Mutt. One Gangadharan - Thiruvikkraman made a gift of land for rearing a flower-garden for the temple of Vadaperunkoil. One inscription refers to the digging of a small branch channel leading from the perungulikkal of Tirumukkulam tank. Another seems to register the lease deeds on karanmai tenure executed by the tenants of the temple lands to temple Officials. A still another inscription mentions the grant of exemption by the king from the payment of several taxes on the lands of Kilasallikulam village gifted by Sankaranarayan Srikantha Vajapeyajiyar for the conduct of worship in the temple of Bhagavathi Vinnagar Alvar erected by him. A record of the regn of Kulothunga Chola mentions the gift of sheep by one Kudanthai Kidanthan for a perpetual lamp to the burnt in Vadaperunkoil The wife of one Madhava Bhattar made a gift of two night lamps for the same temple During the reign of Sundara | Pandya, Prince Vikrama Pandya granted a reduction of tax with the approval of the king on the representation of the Mahasabha of Srivilliputtur. An inscription states

acharya.org

ஸ்ரீ ராமர்

acharya.org

மன்மதன்

acharya.org

that land was granted to a person for keeping watch of the inner entrance to the temple Two other inscriptions records the gift of land, house-site and cooked offerings to the two persons appointed as Senior clerk (Meleluttu) and Mantapa Accountant (Kanakku) Another inscription of the Saka year 1468 (1546 A D) mentions the gift of land, house site and cooked offerings to one Kalingarayan Ulagudaiyaperumal for service as clerk in the temple under the orders of the king Parakrama Pandya. Another inscription of Madurai Nayak King states that the boundaries of Andal temple lands were property defined by the Committee consisting of Veerappa Nayak & Ariyanatha Mudaliar etc, Remission of certain minor taxes leviable from barbers was granted under the orders of the king Veerappa Nayak of Madurai An interesting information is furnished in an inscription wherein the temples of Andal and Vadaperunkoil and the assembly of Srivilliputtur were declared as asylums for the residents of several Nadus during times of trouble. In one inscription we see the agent of the temple (Amildar) issueing an order stating that any one purchasing from temple funds Iluppai oil and ghee except for temple requirements shall be considered to have committed sins An inscription of the Saka year 1596 (1674 A.D.) relates to lands granted on Sarvamanya tenure to certain mentor playing on the pipe Melam and provides for the increase in the strength 56 on occasions There are inscriptions making grants for the service called "Sandi" in the temple and also for the merit of the close relatives of donors.

acharya.org

12. TEMPLE ADMINISTRATION.

According to tradition, Periyalvar was the first trustee of the temple. During the reigns of the Pandys. Nayaks and Vijayanagar Kings they looked after the affairs of the temple through their officials and village assemblies. They made liberal donations and grants of lands and Villages for the maintenance of daily offerings and worship and for celebrating festivals This is evident from the several inscriptions found in the temple. In the British regime the temple was under their direct supervision till A.D. 1831 From 1841 one Trustee was appointed and from 1846 a Trust Board under the control of the Tirunelveli District Sri Vaishnava Committee was conducting the administration. After the advent of the Inam Commission in 1867, Varagunrama Pandya Chinna Thamniar, the Zamindar of Sivagiri was appointed as Manager and he continued to administer. When the Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments Board was constituted in 1927 it appointed an executive committee to be incharge of this temple administration. On the report of Chinthamani Chettiar for fasli 1379 an Evecutive Officer and a Trust Board were appointed in 1938 and this arrangement continues till the persent day.

JEWELS AND VEHICLES: There are jewels of gold, gole set with precidus stones and gold-plated vahanas in the temple. Their total cost is estimated at several lakhs of rupees. No-table among the jewels are pendent, gold mango-garland, head covering (Kondai) all inlaid with valuable stones, gold coverings

acharya.org

and gold pot donated by Cunniah, the famous proprietor of a dramatic Tirumangala, gold coverings for hands and feet set with precious stones (Navaratna) for the deity of Andal donated by Chinthamani Chettiar and the gold pot plone weight 305 tolas and it is being used to carry Tirumanchanam on special occasions. Story goes that Kambar, the great author of the Tamil Ramayana persented an ornament called "Chutakam" (சூடகம்) when he came to worship in the temple. This event is being commemorated on the eight day of Margali festival when Andal is taken to the gate of the great tower and adorned with that ornament chutakam which is referred to in the 27th song of Thiruppavai. It is to be remembered here that the poet had glorified the magnificance of this great tower in a verse which is found inscribed in it. It is also said that Krishna Devaraya, the Vijayanagar King came and worshipped at Srivilliputtur temple and no recorded evidence to support it. There are gold-plated Garuda, Hanuman, Chandraprabha, Hamsa, Sesha, Simha and Horse Vahanas. There are also ivory palanquin and gold Tholukiniyan, palanquin and throne. Apart from these there are wooden vahanas and a Kannadi chaparam.

acharya.org

13. OTHER LOCAL TEMPLES.

There are other temples in and around Srivilliputtur to which the visitor can go and worship. Important of them are Tiruannamalai, Kattalagar, Krishnan and Rengar temples These are under the control of Nachiar Devasthanam. Each of them has its own attraction. A short account about each of them is given below:-

Tiruannamalai: One should not confound this vaishnava shrine with the famous Siva temple at Tiruvannamalai in the North Arcot district. This temple is situated on a hill at a distance of two miles north of the Andal temple. There is a good metaled road and one can reach the place only by jutka or bullock-cart or bus The place is also called Tirumalai, Tiruannamalai and Tirupathi of the south It is said that Tirupathi Sri Venkatachalapathi, Himself came here and was pleased to take His abode here for bestowing grace on His devotees Tirumangai Alvar called Tirupathi Srinivasan as "Anna" and so hill came to called Tiruannamalai. The tope of the hill which is 250 feet high is reached by a regular flight of 217 steps and the temple is visible for some miles around, It has one pragara. Lord Venkatesa is in a standing posture Large number of devotees congregate during the Saturdays of the Tamil month Purattasi and fulfil vows by offering sheep. cows, gold and silver articles, vessels, clothes, money etc. On all these Saturdays there will be Garuda Utsavam. On the last Saturday of every Tamil month the deity is also taken on Garuda Vahana round the hill The distance round the hill is one mile.

acharya.org

The Utsava deity Srinivasaperumal is taken from Andal temple to the hill on all these occasions for Garudaseva. There are two daily pujas here noon and evening. There is a Theertham called KONERI at the foot of the hill where devotees take their holy bath. A big Vinayaka idol recently installed on the bank of Koneri as having been unearthed in the vicinity of this hill is worth worshipping. There are mutts and chatrams near the hill where pilgrims can conveniently stay.

Kattalagar Temple:- Only to distinguish this from the Kudal Alagar in Madurai city and Kallalagar or Alagarkoil at a distance of 12 miles from Madurai, this deity is called Kattalagar or the Alagar of the forest. This temple is at a distance of nine miles, west of Srivilliputtur. One can only go by carts or jeeps through rugged road up to a distance of six or seven miles. Then one has to walk up to reach the temple It is situated on a mountain in the Western Ghats amidst dence forest of Sandal-wood, Eucalyptus and other trees and rank and wilk vegetation Pilgrims and picnic parties will experience the painful pleasure in reaching the temple. They will have a sigh of relief on seling the perennial water-falls called the Nupura Ganga pouring into an artificial reservoir. After having a pleasant bath one has to reach the temple by a flight of constructed steps. The temple though small is compact in having one prakara, Maha Mantapa, Artha-mandapa and Garbagraha Lord Sundararajan with Sridevi and Bhudevi came from Tirumalirunjolai (Alagarkoil) and was pleased to stay here and blessed

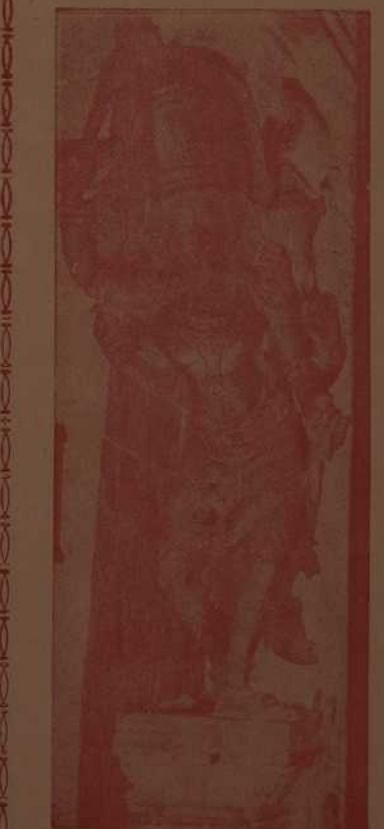
acharya.org

Manduha Rishi. Menta in isalso made about this in the Sthalapurana of Tirumalirunjolai. There are only two pujas in the week on Wednesdays and Saturdays when worshippers can go. The Sannidhi faces east and outside the temple there is Karuppasami's Sannidhi. The temple is situated in such enchanting enveironments, the solemn solitude and silence of which will enthral the soul of any man.

Krishnankoil: The temple lies to the south of the Railway feeder road in a small village There are two prakaras and in the Garbagraha there is Sri Krishna with Rukmini and Satyabhama During the seventh day of the Adi pooram festival in Andal temple, Andal and Rengamannar are brought her and what is called "Sayana Tirukolam" is celebrated here. It is worth seeing There are four inscriptions in the temple, three in Tamil and one in Grantha and Tamil. Two relate to the reing of Pandya King Athiveerarama Srivallabha Deva of Saka year 1493 (A. D. 1571) and these mention the gift of Veppankulam village for conducting offering and worship in Krishna temple built in Tirumalli Nadu for the merit of Veerappa Nayak. The third records the grand of the village Tiruvenkatasamudram to God Krishna for the merit of Krishnappa Nayak The fourth inscription registers a tax-free grant of land as Sarvamanya to certain wahermen to settle down in the village and continue their service to the temple. These two inscriptions were recorded respectively during the reigns of Viswanatha Nayak and Muthuveerappa Nayak of Madurai.

Rangar Temple: It is at a distance of four miles

acharya.org



VISVAKARMA

acharya.org

SAKTHI

acharya.org

north of Srivilliputtur. It can be reached by going two miles in the Madurai road and then turning to the north-west. The God is in a standing posture with Sridevi and Bhudevi. He is called Rangar because Rangu Maharishi worshipped Him. The name should not be mistaken for Ranganathar who should be in lying posture. About a mile from here on a hill there is a water falls called the Kannuva Theertham.

Apart from these temples there is a big Siva temple dedicated to God Vaidyanathaswami at Madavarvilagam about half a mile from Srivilliputtur on the Rajapalayam road. It is under a separate administration.

Renovation Committee: A renovation Committee approved by the Government has been formed underthe presidentship of Thiru R. Krishnasamy Naidu, M.L C. Very recently Samprokshanam was performed to Sri Andal temple on 2—6—'70 after attending elobrate repairs both at Andal temple and at Thiru pooram Mandapam. Repairs to the tallest tower at periyaperumal temple is being taken under the super vision of Thiruppani Committee as P.W.D. deposit work at the cost of several lakhs. The reconstruction of Garba girham and Mahamantapam of Sri Krishnan temple are also in progress Further renovation to Ennaikappu Mandapam, Thirumukkulam and other sub shrine are to be undertaken by public collection for which liberal donation are requested.

acharya.org

APPENDIX A

Saint Andal's Thiruppavai

OR

The Hymn of the bath on the Divine dawn

(English translation by Thiru R. Seshadri Ayyangar, B A., B L., Advocate, Ramanathapuram).

1. Blooming with full moon this day holy
of Margali that the sagessprize
For Bath true. Oh maids! no more tarry
From Gokul's homes, arise;
For lance-strong Nanda's royal Son
And Yasoda's lion cub young
Our Grace-cloud, Narayan, like radiant Sun
Alone, grants our prayers, ere long.
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

2. Ye, who people this vast earth, listen
A great vow, in our hearts installed
In honour, we sing of his milky ocean
Of Him, who dwells within all
And with no sip of milk, no jewel, no flower
No Anchanam in eyelashes long
Bathe we, in water are twilight hour
And pure, to the needy is our service strong
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

3. If singing the measurer of unmeasured worlds
Bathe we in His gloried name
Thrice monthly shover, the bountiful clouds
Gold plenty, the lands accalaim
And then fair fish would rice-stalks, high
grown, thrill
And bees dream in lilies, long,
The Cows generous, over potfulls spill
And esternal, our riches strong
Comes, to the word, trumpet His Song.

4 Oh Clouds, generous! no treasures, withold
Drink deep, from billowing brine
And darting high with watery-load
Dark, like the Primeval shine;
Then flashing, like His Discus, thy
lightning far
Thundering as His conch blows, long
Charge, as his Bow strung, thy
torrent shower
For our Bath, in numbers strong
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

5 Of the charmer of worlds, Mathura's child
The lamp, in Gokul's homes
The pride of Juma's woodlands wild
Who has illumed his mother's womb
If we sing in hearts of devotion pure
And sprinkle love-flowers strong
Burns sin, as fibre, in blazing fire
And dies past, and coming, long
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

6. Now Hark! the birds flap their waking wings
In Garuda's holy shrine
Hearest thou not, their conch-shells, ring
Rice girl, from life-slumbers, vain
For oh Him, though poison sucks
sweet life-power
The roof cause of creation strong
Communing the sages herald this hour
hari, Hreedom's message long
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

7. The King-crows, their chattering,
had loud begun
List ye not, Oh sleepy girl
With jingling trinkest our matrons churn
And their plying milky-rods whirl;
Yet thou high-prized, in our youthful band
Shall ye lie, on thy bed, headstrong
When singing of Kesav, thine comrades, stand
Humble, at thy portals, long;
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

8. Now, white oped is yond east horizon dark
Mark, buffaloes far have spread
Barring the girls who for bath embarked
We stand, Oh wake from bed?
For of Him, who broke demon Kesi's cheek
And those wrestlers battered, strong
Oh highborn! with love, if our devotion meek
He would grace in pity, ere long
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

நடனமாது

acharya.org

ரதி

acharya.org

9. Round lit, by lan ps, and by incense filled
In thy chambered-cot-reclined
Oh uncle's daughter ! slumbering still
To ope thy latch-door gain;
Oh wake thy girl, good aunt in side
Is she dumb, or in deafness, strong
Has her, Dame Slumber hypnotised ?
In our Lord's glories, rouse her long,
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

10. Oh Dame, self-centred, by penances hard,
Shall none deign answer still
When strive all, faith-fragrant Thulasi Lord
Our desires, to our hearts, fulfils;
What drath-drunk Kumbakarna won
Assisgned tee, his slumber long
Oh sleeping (jewel; who our homes edorn
From self-dizziness wake thee, strong;
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

11. Milking with calves, His myriad kine
Who deals, as his enemies, yield
The honest cowherd's gold creeper, fine
Start Peacock, in thy native wilds;
When at thy portals, sing thy comrades dear
Oh him, our divine-cloud, long
How selfish, unmoved sleep speechless clear
Could His beloved, discard us strong ?
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

12. Crying in pain, the Cows, unmilked
As for their calves, their udders rain
Mirry, whose richly mansions, drench
Oh his fortuned sister fine
Clasping thy portals, in dew-damp crowns
Entrancing victor of Ravan long
When we sing, what dread slumber drowns
Oh thy neighbours have risen strong
Come, to the word, trumpet His Song.

13. Who rent the demon-crane's beak in twain
Scotched the cruel Asura's crowns
Singing His glories, all girls have gained
There, into our ordained ground;
Now sleeps yond jupiter, and Venus risen
Hark! birds are fluttering strong
Thine eyes like lotus bees-imprisoned
How lose this good day long
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

14. Mark, in thine backyard garden pond
Blooms lotus, as lily closed
In their ocherous vestments, for their
temples, yond
In blown-conches pass hermits closer;
Yet thou, who bold to rouse us, swore
Girl heedless, with tongue long
Hail our Lord, lotus-eyed, now more
With conch and Times-wheel, strong
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

15. ' Young parrot, out dear, drowsest thou, again"
"Cry not shrill, when my journey near."
"Clever though thy words, yet thy heart divine"
"Sharp witted are ye; well Hold ye
I am clever"
"Oh start quick, has thou, a bath quite another"
"Is our band, full; "Yea, come count
us, long
And of Him, who blasted his enemies power
And the vile elephant, Oh sing three strong"
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

16. Oh master Nanda's noble palace guard!
And in his bannered Irbournum door
Oh yee, who guard, ope the door, of our Lord
For our Charmer had yester swore
Trumpets, in his Service, for his shepherd girls;
So sing we pure, to wake Him long
Ah dear, deny not by hard words, shrill
His friendly doors unfasten, strong
Come, to the world,trumpet His Song.

17. Oh Giver of rice, drink, rainmant, free
Nanda, our Lord, arise
Oh Gold shoot, our fair Tribe-creeper's
Queen Yasoda, three appraise
And Oh measurer of rent heavens outgrown
Rise diven Lord, slumbering strong
Ah Baladev, with gold anklets adorned
Sleep not with thy youngster, long
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

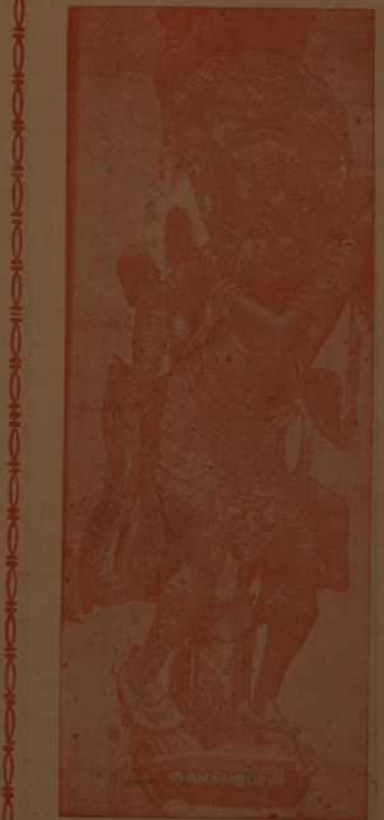
acharya.org

18. For our Nanda, who incho-mad elephant quells
Oh, in-law-his daughter, dear
Fair Nappina, whose tresses, fragrance spell
Ope, with bracelets, jingling clear
For the cock, their shrill calls, are
echoing far
And oft, cuckoos have warblep long
Beseated, on Madavi's blooding bowers
And thy Lord's glories, hymn we, strong
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

19. Over cot, ivory-legged, lit by stately lamps
On her, who over soft bed rest
On blooming tressed Nappina, ye who drowse
With thy crown over her lovely bust
Open thy lips! Oh dame unselfish, dear
Streaked with Anchanam, long
Suffer him arise, part a moment from near
Befitting thy divine mercy, strong
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

20. Ere quake immortals, thrice ten and three
Saviour, of their woes, before
Rise, prop for the weak, giver to foes, full free
Hot panges, oh pore of yore!
And thou, with slender waist and lips
red coral
And of softly bust, like gold
Oh Nappina, our Fortune arise thee, loyal
And dress for bath, early thy lord;
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org



GUHA

acharya.org

AGORA VEERABHADRA

acharya.org

21. Rich in numberleess, munificent, king
Who milk-pots out flowing. rain
Oh Heir of Him, waking, thy glory attain
Oh Sovereign, who in scriptures, shine
Oh Absolute, unknowable, world-born
Now visible Oh Sun, Arise
As resistless, at thy feet, fall foes forlorn
Hymn we, at thy doors, thy praise,
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

22. Like kings, coveteour of wide beauteous world
Vanquished low, beneath thy stately chair
And wait in court, gain we thy strong foothold
And like buds of lotus, cuplike blooking fair
Oh! slowly ope on us, thy love-red eyes!
For, as full grown arise both sun and moon
If thy royal orbs, glancing, rain down grace
Live them our sins dark, in thy blissful morn
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

23. As in mountain-cave, one with his mate, for rain
In slumber too, a terror, the august lion
By alarm, his fiery eyes awoke, shake his
mamnes
And straightened high, thundering dread
amain
And lionine odorous, herdic majestic stride,
Like a cloud of violets, wald Lord
from thy (Place hall)

acharya.org

And beseated on thy throne, for truth well-tried
Hear our plaint Oh! redress the cause of all
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

24. Hail then, thine world-scaling worshipful feet
Hail, invading-prowess which Lanka pound
Hail glory, whose kick killed the demon wheel fleet
Hail, anklets, whose calf-club confound,
Hails patience, who held long, alft the hill
Hail spear; which thy enemies quell
For ever, in thine service, in thy story revel
To sing, we for thy favour now swell
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

25. Oh thou, born son of uncompared one
Grown stealthy, as another's in the self same night
Unbearing thee, for him, his wrongs wanton
What Kamsa wove, who foiled, by thy might
And raged, like fire in his bowels, our Lord!
FOR THEE, we come if thou, to our prayers nod
Thy wealth of wealth, and gloried story we will laud
Ended our strife in thy blissful sweet concord,
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

26. Oh! Love incarnate, who like Sapphire charm
Ancient Sages have long this fast maintained
Hear, what we require, the world,
with fear, who storms
Like thy milky Conch, who has fame attained
Shall conches, numberless, their message blow
And High sounding drums, and heralds before
Flags, canopies, and several lamps aglow
Oh leaf-lain Lord, grant thee, from thy store
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

27. Conqueror of unconquered, so gloried
Govind! our singing Fast's sweet reward
Should all the land applaud, than past storied
our bracelets, armlets, love-symbols, Lord
And jewels for ankles, ears and others we don
And dressed, thy nectar, milk-melted food
Ghee overflown, in elbows, dripping down
Sip we, in thy union, thy Bliss attained
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

28. Marching behind cattle, in every dwelling wilds,
Eating our goal, for wit without clim
In Cowherd's tribe, for us, yet Thou hast hailed
How proud, OUR MERIT THOU,
whom, our kith proclaim
Thou hast no blemish, Oh Govind, withal
Thy bond, here grown, can both never unbind
If ignorant, chidish, loving, small
names had called
Fron not, Lord, oh favour for
our suit inclined
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

acharya.org

29. Clustersd for worship in duskfull-dawn
In lotus-bloom thy feet, why yearn, oh hear
In the tribe, who battened the
flock, then feed. (Thou born)
Spurn not enrolling us in thy service near
Not for selfish Bliss, swarm Govind, our own
Steadfast, for thrice-seven Advents.
with thee full-bound
Eternal, Thy kin; serve we Thine will alone
Unsever the shakles, for our Service unbound
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

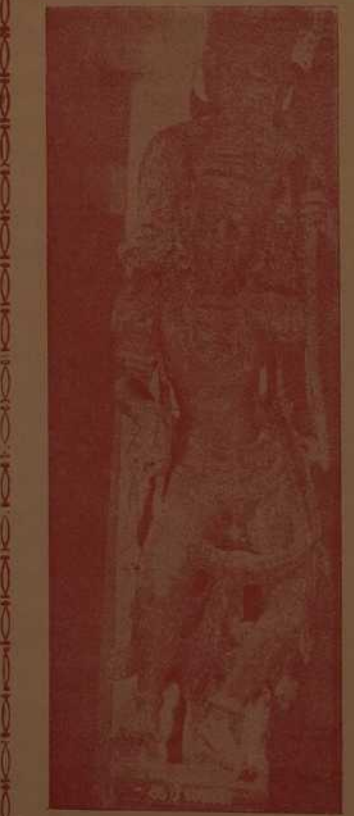
30. As churned the sea, to the supreme ark of yore
Retraced His Sri, to Kesav, Gokuls maids
How trimly jewelled, like full moon
blooming more
Praying won their meed of service wide
Sung by the child of Bhattanath, love-bed
His Gotha's bridal wreath of Tamil verse
Who chants, the Lord of Sri,
whose eyes love-red
With lofty shoulders, shall for ever bless
Come, to the world, trumpet His Song.

(Published with the kind permission of the author's brother Thiru M. R. Narayana Iyengar, B. A., B. L., Manamadurai.)

acharya.org

GANDEEPAN

acharya.org



KARNA

acharya.org

APPENDIX B.

MEHAVIDU THUTHU OR MESSAGE THROUGH CLOUDS IN NACHIAR TIRUMOLI

SRI ANDAL - THE BRIDE OF THE LORD

(RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BY THIRU P. SRI. ACHARYA)

(Sri Andal pining in love for the Lord of the Venkata Hills beholds the dark clouds comming from the north, and requests them to carry a message from her the Lord.)

1. Ah, ye clouds, that gather and spread a blue-
canopy all over the wide heavens!
Perchance, you have brought to message from my
Lord of the Venkata Hills, Where many a clear
stream flower!
I am stricken sore and my eyes do shower tears,
that drop and gather-on the tips of my breasts;
To ruin my female form-does it redound to
His glory?

2. Ye dark clouds that do shower pearls and
gold besides!
Have you brought any sweet tidings into
me from the dark-blue hued-Lord of the
Venkata Hills?
Ah, the raging fire of love enqulfs me and burns
me fierce, all thro' the gloomy night;
And the scented southern breeze fans this flame in
the darkest hour! (Tell me, "Is this right"?)

acharya.org

3 Ye, clouds, famed for your bounty! My lustre,
my hue, my mind and my bracelets,
And balmy sleep even, have all fled me. made
poor by my Lord's parting -and my frame is
ruined.
Tell me. can I hope, in this sorry plight, to keep
myself alive, as I would,
Singing the glory of my Lord GOVINDA OF the
Venkata Hills, wuth cool flowing steams.

4. Ye clouds, the lightning flashes from your dark
frame! so does the Lady Grace (LAKSHMI) in
the bosom of my Lord of the Venkata Hills!
Pray, tell him, how my rising youthful breasts
long ever
To be pressed close to His glowing bosom – (They
would brook no denial)

5. Ye dark clouds, you rise up together, devouring
all space!
You pour down the rains that shatter down the
honeyed blooms of the Venkata Hills!
With his nails sharp and strong, my Lord did, of
yore, tear up the entrails of the demon
HIRANYA:
He has seized and taken away my bracelets too-
If He would restore them, tell him of my sorry
plight!

acharya.org

6. Ye, cooling clouds, you have drunk deep of the waters of the seas, and risen up in splendour!
You, spread up and pour down-showers, over the Venkata Hills, Whose Lord-did, as a Dwarf, grasp all the earth from Mahabali!
See how I have wasted in body, like a wood-apple eaten by a worm at its core;
It is all Lord Narayana's doing-pray, tell him of my sad state!

7. Ye cool clouds that roam over the Venkata Hills, whose Lord did churn-the mighty ocean, the home of the conch!
This is my prayer unto the glorious feet of the crimson lotus-eyed Lord.
If for one day, he would stay and press deep my breasts, to rob them of their saffron paste,
My life may yet linger in my frail frame-Pray tell him this!

8. Ye dark clouds that gather in the winter over the Venkata Hills
My Lord is ever victorious in battle I began to chant His glorious name, RAMA,
When lo, all my limbs did fall dismembered, like frail Anta leaves in the wintry shower!
Will not my Lord, during his sojourn bless me one day with his sweet word?

acharya.org

9. Ye, dark clouds, that abide in the Venkata Hills
and swing aloft. like tuskers in rut!
"Ah, this is the word of the Lord that rests on
the serpent-couch,
"He pledged himself to be the Rufuge of all; yet
He has alin this poor trusting creeper of a lady"
So will the world say and discredit the Lord-
should this be so?

10. There are the words of Godha (Andal), the fair
browed daughter of the glorious Devotee of
Villiputtur:
In deep love for the Lord of the Venkata Hills,
that has the serpent-couch.
She did entrust a message to the clouds, in this
wise;
Those that would take a heart and sing this Tamil
Poetry-will glory ever in the Lord's Service.

acharya.org

Printed at: Narayanan Printers, Srivilliputtur.

Price Rs. 3—00

acharya.org